

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GENEVA 03418 051630Z

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FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7098

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 3418

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IO FOR ASST SECY MAYNES AND PLAMER ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ILO

SUBJECT: ILO: US APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL LABOR CONFERENCE (ILC)

REF: (A) STATE 96719, (B) GENEVA 3039

1. OUR QUESTIONS IN THIS MESSAGE ARE INTENDED TO BRING OUR TACTICS ON ARTICLE 17 AND STRUCTURE OF THE ILO INTO FOCUS. WE THINK THEY ARE NATURAL QUESTIONS WHICH YOU COULD RAISE IN LOW KEY AT THE MAY 6 DELEGATION BRIEFING AND YET TOO SENSITIVE AND URGENT FOR US TO PUT TO HOROWITZ ON THE PHONE OR TO WAIT UNTIL THE MAY 23 GOVERNING BODY SESSION.

2. THE EXPLANATION OF OUR TACTICS ON ARTICLE 17 IN REF A WAS OUR FIRST INDICATION OF HOW WASHINGTON AND HOROWITZ INTEND TO APPROACH THE UPCOMING INTERNATIONAL LABOR CONFERENCE (ILC). ALTHOUGH WE UNDERSTAND THE RATIONALE IN PARA ONE REF A, WE HAVE SOME DOUBTS ABOUT THE VALUE OF ALL THE SECRECY, THE POINT ---AND W MADE THIS TO HOROWITZ IN A TELCON---WAS THAT OUR INDUSTRIALIZED MARKET ECONOMY COUNTRIES (IMEC) ALLIES ARE SENSITIVE TO HAVING POSITIONS PRESENTED TO THEM

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"GIFT WRAPPED"; FOR THE PAST YEAR, ALMOST ALL IMEC DELS HAVE RESENTED WHAT THEY SEE AS A HIGH-HANDED TAKE-IT-OR-LEAVE-IT POLICY TOWARD THE ILO. NONE OF THIS SHOULD COME AS NEWS TO ANYONE ON THE U.S. SIDE. MOREOVER, THE STAKES ON ARTICLE 17 ARE HIGH; IT IS A CRUCIAL ISSUE; A VICTORY WOULD BE A SIGNAL REVERSAL OF POLITICIZATION IN ILO; THE AMENDMENT EFFORT HAS ALREADY HAD AN EFFECT

ON OUR POLICY IN UNESCO AND COULD SPREAD ELSEWHERE.
WE HAVE NOT AND DO NOT ADVOCATE REACHING "AN AGREED
TEXT" WITH IMEC BUT WE BELIEVE THE BASIC U.S. POSITION
ON THE GB TEXT SHOULD BE CONVEYED TO IMEC EARLY IN THE
MAY 23 GB SESSION IN A WAY THAT PERMITS THEM TO SEE
WHAT THE OPTIONS ARE IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE LDCS.
IF THEY ARE TO SUPPORT THE FINAL TEXT, WE THINK THEY
ARE ENTITLED TO THIS SORT OF CONSULTATION.

3. THE U.S. STRATEGY (REF A) SEEMS TO ASSUME IMEC
WILL FALL MEETLY IN LINE BEHIND AN ARTICLE 17 TEXT
WHICH REPRESENTS MODIFICATIONS DESIRED BY BOTH IMEC AND
THE THIRD WORLD. WE CANNOT FULLY ASSESS THIS STRATEGY
UNTIL WE KNOW MORE ABOUT THE U.S. POSITION ON THE GOVERNING
BODY PROPOSAL. FOR INSTANCE, THE QUESTIONS RAISED BY
THE WORKERS ARE CRUCIAL AND HAVE NOT BEEN ANSWERED
(SEE PARA TWO REF B). WE ARE TOLD IN REF A THAT THE
POSITIONS OF MEXICO, IRAN AND SRI LANKA ARE TO BE
CONSIDERED BUT WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT THESE POSITIONS ARE.
WE AGREE THAT WE SHOULD TRY NOT TO FORECLOSE NEGOTIATING
POSITIONS VIS-A-VIS THE THIRD WORLD IN THE SELECTION
OR STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEES, BUT WE MUST ALSO WEIGH
THE RISK OF DAMAGING FUTURE IMEC SUPPORT BY PRESENTING
IMEC WITH A PACKAGE THEY HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO ACCEPT.
MOREOVER, ANY POSITION AGREED TO BY GOVERNMENTS MUST
ALSO BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS AND WE
CANNOT RISK LOSING THEIR SUPPORT.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: THE QUESTIONS WHICH SHOULD BE
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PUT TO HOROWITZ ON ARTICLE 17 ARE: (1) WHAT SORT OF
NEGOTIATING DOES HE HAVE IN MIND WITH THE THIRD WORLD?
(2) WHAT ARE THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE
ICFTU REP IN PARA TWO OF REF B? (3) HOW DO WE FACE THE
SUBJECTIVE STANDARD IN THE "CONDEMNATORY OR CRITICAL
INTENT" LANGUAGE OF THE GOVERNING BODY TEXT?

5. ANOTHER ISSUE THAT SHOULD BE CLARIFIED FOR OUR
IMEC ALLIES IS OUR POSITION ON STRUCTURE. THIS IS
PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE IN OUR ILO POLICY
BECAUSE WE COULD WIN ALL THE BATTLES IN JUNE AND IF THE
STRUCTURE OF THE ILO IS TAMPERED WITH, WE WOULD LOSE
THE SAME BATTLES IN JUNE OF NEXT YEAR. OUR QUESTIONS ARE (1)
ARE WE GOING TO OPPOSE RENEWAL BY THE ILC OF
THE MANDATE OF THE WORKING PARTY ON STRUCTURE AND
CALL FOR INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS? (2) IF SO, WHAT DO WE
MEAN BY "INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS"? (3) THE 77 ARE LIKELY
TO SEE ANY CONCESSIONS THEY MAKE ON ARTICLE 17 AS A QUID
PRO QUO FOR CONCESSIONS ON STRUCTURAL REFORM; HOW

WILL WE RESPOND TO THIS "PACKAGE DEAL" APPROACH?
AND (4) THE FRENCH TOOK THE POSITION EARLIER THIS YEAR
THAT THE U.S. LETTER GAVE IMEC THE GREATEST POSSIBLE
LEVERAGE TO TAKE A FIRM STAND AGAINST STRUCTURAL CHANGE;
IS THISNOT A VALID POSITION?SORENSEN

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